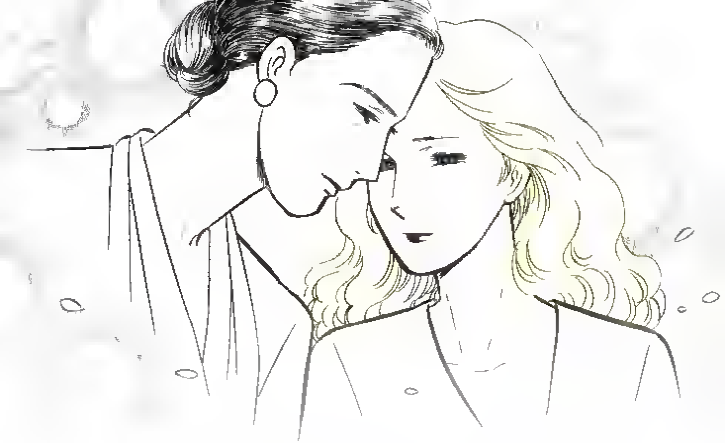

Midnight Flowers

Part B

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A Lilllicious Project
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What does it mean for one person to love another?
Who decided that it was normal for men and women to love each other but abnormal for a woman to love another woman or a man to love another man?
If a flower only blooms by night in the light of the moon, that doesn't make it any less beautiful...

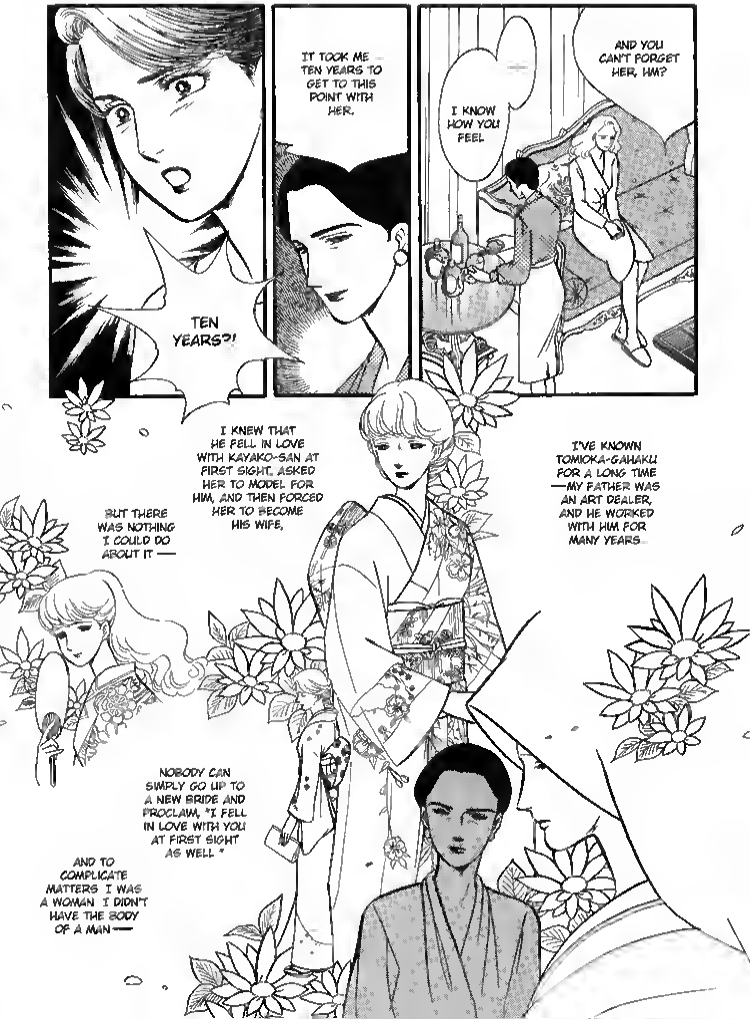
Midnight Flowers

Part B

knock
COME ON IN
WELCOME HOME
I'M BACK

THIS IS KUNO-SAN SHE'S A FRIEND OF YASUYUKI-SAN'S YOU REMEMBER HER, DON'T YOU?
OH, DEAR! WE HAVE A GUEST
IT'S STRANGE MY LIFE THERE SEEMS LIKE A DISTANT MEMORY NOW.
IT HASN'T EVEN BEEN A MONTH SINCE I CAME TO LIVE HERE WITH HER.
EVEN THOUGH
WE MET AT MY HUSBAND'S HOUSE, DIDN'T WE?
ARE YOU HAPPY TOGETHER EVEN SO?
SOCIETY WILL NEVER ACCEPT YOUR RELATION-SHIP
YES

IN OUR SENIOR YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL,
WHILE WE WERE PRACTICING ROMEO AND JULIET FOR THE CULTURAL FESTIVAL,
THE GIRL I LOVE
WAS A CLASSMATE OF MINE
AND SHE RAN AWAY FROM ME
I KISSED HER JUST ONCE
WHEN I GOT TO COLLEGE
I WANTED TO KNOW WHAT "MEN" AND "SEX WITH MEN" WERE LIKE. SINCE THOSE WERE WHAT SHE CHOSE
I TRIED DATING COUNTLESS MEN,
BUT— IT JUST DIDN'T WORK FOR ME

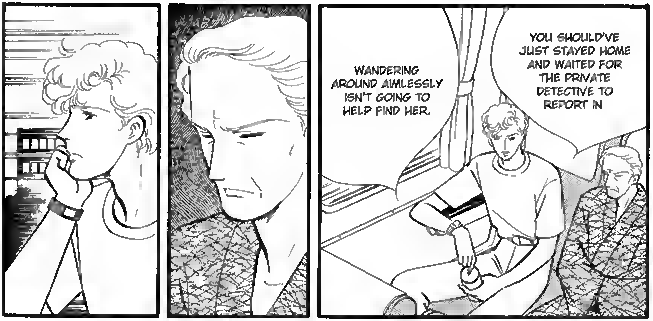

TEN YEARS?!
IT TOOK ME TEN YEARS TO GET TO THIS POINT WITH HER.
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL
AND YOU CAN'T FORGET HER, HM?
I KNEW THAT HE FELL IN LOVE WITH KAYAKO-SAN AT FIRST SIGHT, ASKED HER TO MODEL FOR HIM, AND THEN FORCED HER TO BECOME HIS WIFE.
I'VE KNOWN TOMIOKA-GAHAKU FOR A LONG TIME —MY FATHER WAS AN ART DEALER, AND HE WORKED WITH HIM FOR MANY YEARS.
BUT THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO ABOUT IT —
NOBODY CAN SIMPLY GO UP TO A NEW BRIDE AND PROCLAIM, "I FELL IN LOVE WITH YOU AT FIRST SIGHT AS WELL."
AND TO COMPLICATE MATTERS I WAS A WOMAN. I DIDN'T HAVE THE BODY OF A MAN —

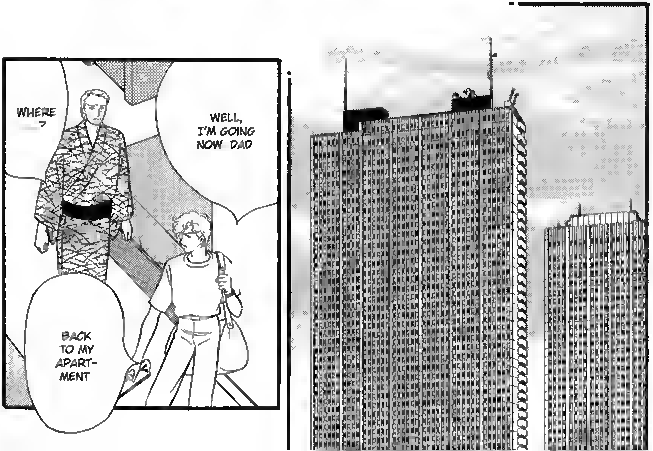
IN THE PRIVACY OF MY HEART YEAR AFTER YEAR.
I LOVED HER
SO WHAT DID YOU DO?
AND SHE REALIZED HOW I FELT ABOUT HER.
Jiyugaoka Chambord
The way they're spontaneously affectionate with each other makes it seem like they've been together for years....
R R R
I'm jealous.
KUNO SPEAKING

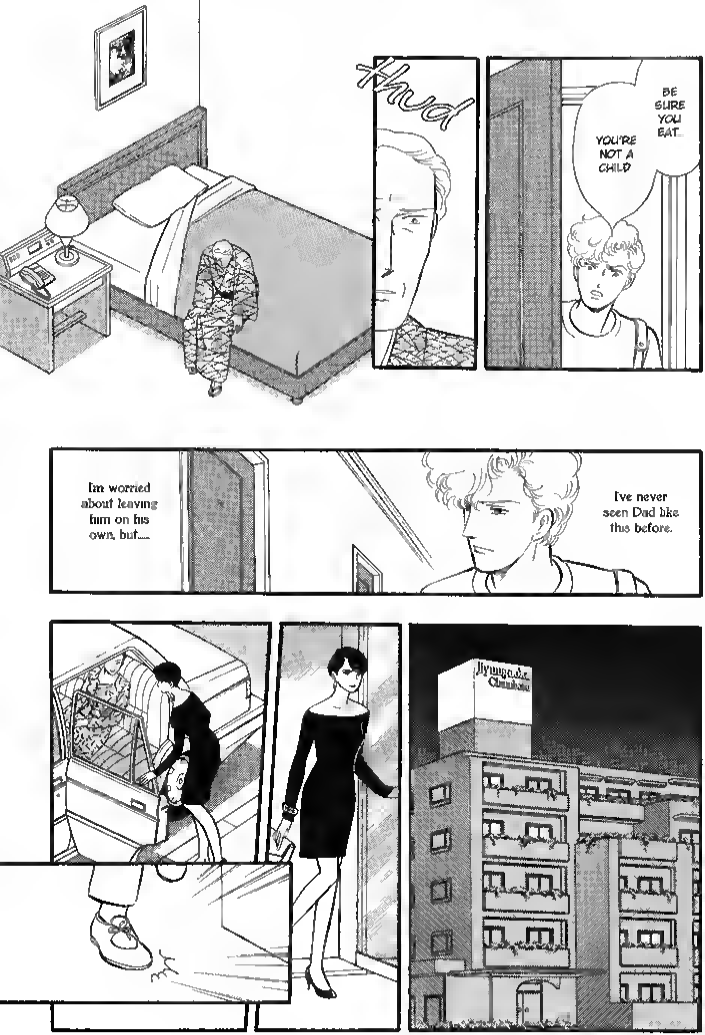
NO NOTHING IN PARTICULAR, BUT...
OH— DID YOU NEED SOMETHING NAKAYAMA-KUN?
It's me
I'M.
BUT IT'S GOOD YOU CALLED I'LL BE BLUNT
FLATTERED BY YOUR FEELINGS, BUT I JUST CAN'T RETURN THEM.
I DID GET THAT VIBE FROM YOU
YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH ANOTHER GUY AREN'T YOU?
You're welcome to believe that
I'm sorry.
click
OH! W-
No way....

crash
I can't give up on her based on just this one phone call...!
slam
DAD!
I'M GOING BACK TO TOKYO TOMORROW!
OH ?
IT'S TIME YOU GOT YOUR-SELF TOGE-THER.
CLASSES HAVE ALREADY STARTED AND I CAN'T STAY HERE WITH YOU FOREVER.
TOKYO
I'LL GO TO TOKYO WITH YOU
HUH?!
HER PARENTS LIVE IN TOKYO
SHE MUST HAVE A LOT OF ACQUAIN-TANCES THERE TOO
YES, I'M SURE OF IT

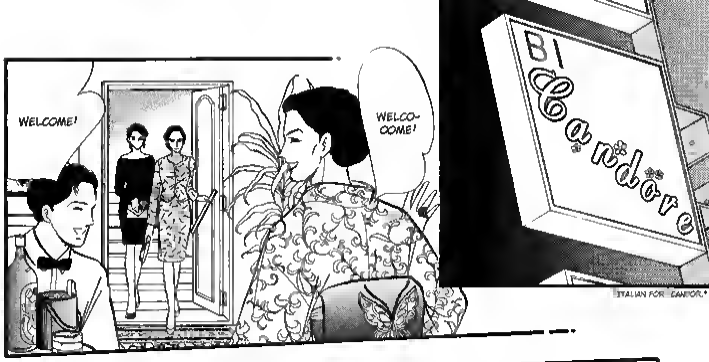
Cwee


YOU SHOULD'VE JUST STAYED HOME AND WAITED FOR THE PRIVATE DETECTIVE TO REPORT IN
WANDERING AROUND AIMLESSLY ISN'T GOING TO HELP FIND HER.


WELL, I'M GOING NOW DAD
WHERE ?
BACK TO MY APART-MENT

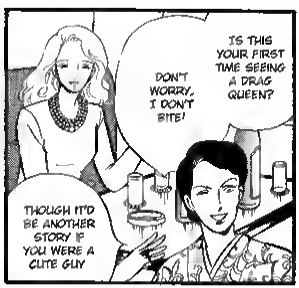

Hmm
BE SURE YOU EAT.
YOU'RE NOT A CHILD
I'm worried about leaving him on his own, but.....
I've never seen Dad like this before.

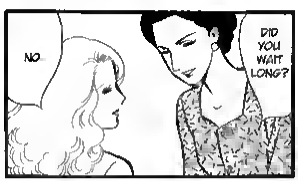
Huh..?
Why are Kaoru-san and Suegusa-san...
redall
Coffee Shop
Alley
Doll Shop
Hollyhock
CAFE
F- FOLLOW THAT WHITE CAR, PLEASE!
HUH?
WHAT, SIR?


WELCOME!
WELCO-OOME!
BI Cantare
*ITALIAN FOR "CANTOR."

MAMA, THIS IS KUNO KAORU-SAN
OH, AND YOU'RE NEW HERE AREN'T YOU?
YOUR SWEETIE IS WAITING FOR YOU

SAEGUSA-SAN, THIS PLACE IS——
THIS PLACE IS FOR GAYS AND LESBIANS.
HEHE SURPRI-SED?

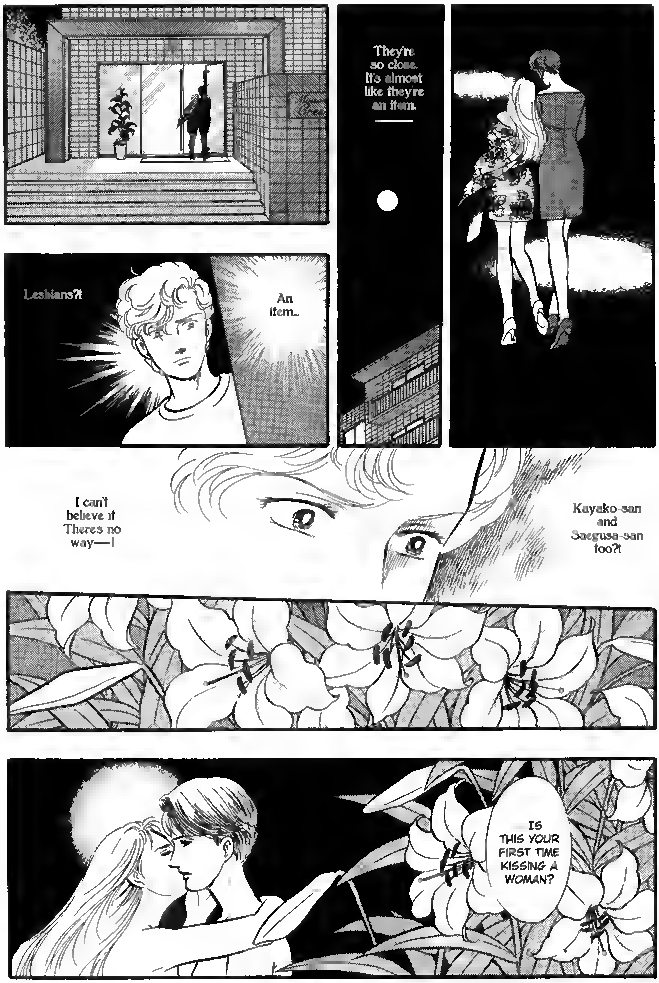

IS THIS YOUR FIRST TIME SEEING A DRAG QUEEN?
DON'T WORRY, I DON'T BITE!
THOUGH IT'D BE ANOTHER STORY IF YOU WERE A CUTE GUY


NO.
DID YOU WAIT LONG?

AND REGULAR PEOPLE WHO DON'T LOOK FUNNY AT GAY PEOPLE
click...
bump
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, KYOUKO-SAN
MAY I JOIN YOU?
OH, MARIE!
YOU CERTAINLY HAVE A SHARP EYE
WELL, THIS NEW GIRL ISN'T YOUR GIRL-FRIEND RIGHT?
SO—

GO AHEAD
YAY!
SHE HAS THE RIGHT TO DECIDE TOO
WHAT DO YOU SAY, KAORU-SAN?
YOU KNOW KAORU-SAN,
YOU DON'T HAVE TO HIDE WHO YOU ARE HERE
Opera
THAT YOU'RE A WOMAN WHO ONLY LOVES WOMEN
YOU CAN BE OPEN ABOUT THE FACT
All the people going in and out seem kind of off...
What is that piece.....?

NO NO!
YOU CAN'T GO HOME, KAORU-CHAN
YOU'RE COMING HOME WITH ME!
Bell
Huh?!
SEE YOU, MAMA
THANK YOOOU!
SEE YOU LATER, KAORU-SAN
GOOD NIGHT
Kayako-san and Saegusa-san——!
Kaoru-san and—— whoo that woman?
MY APARTMENT'S RIGHT NEARBY


They're so close. It's almost like they're an item.
Lesbians?!
An item..
I can't believe it. There's no way—!
Kayako-san and Saegusa-san too?!
IS THIS YOUR FIRST TIME KISSING A WOMAN?

COPY WHAT I'M DOING TO YOU, OKAY?
I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT TO DO... THEN
BUT I'VE NEVER DONE THIS SORT OF THING WITH A WOMAN BEFORE
...NO...
WHAT FEELS GOOD TO YOU FEELS GOOD TO ME TOO
Because we're both women....

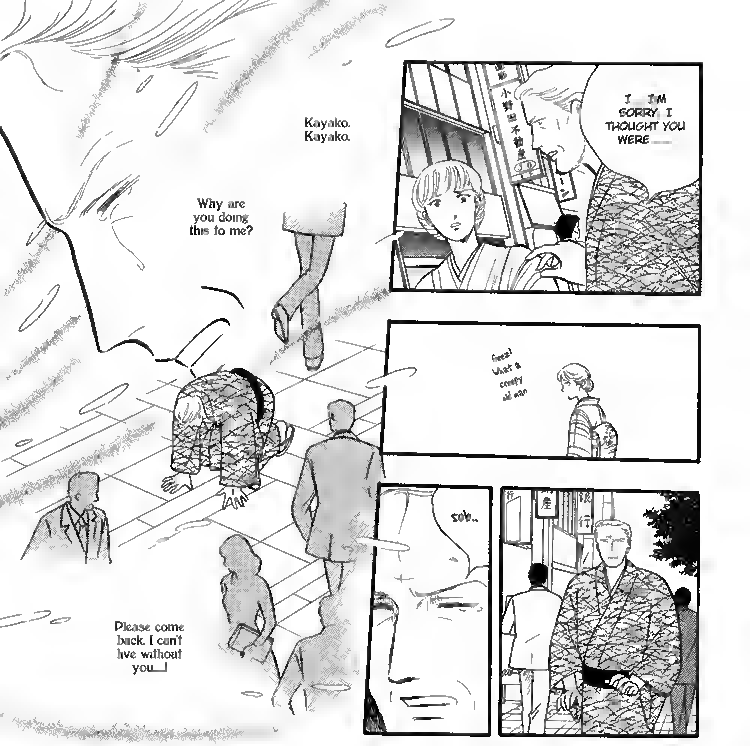
BUT THE "NORMAL" THING IS FOR WOMEN TO LOVE MEN, RIGHT?
AND MEN TO LOVE WOMEN
WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO BE "NORMAL"?
WHAT DOES IT MATTER IF I'M DIFFERENT FROM OTHER PEOPLE?
THEY'RE THEM, AND I'M ME
IF I'M NOT BOTHERING ANYONE ELSE, WHY SHOULD IT MATTER HOW I LIVE MY LIFE?
WHY DO I LIKE WOMEN? .....HEHE.
YOU SURE ASK WEIRD QUESTIONS.
YOU'RE RIGHT
I WAS BORN TO "NORMAL" PARENTS, AND RAISED PRETTY NORMALLY
I DON'T KNOW WHY I ENDED UP LIKE THIS

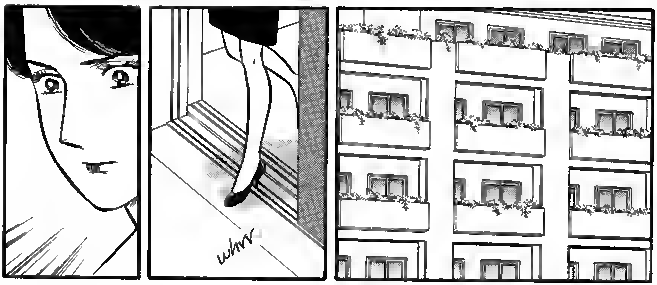
No. I was like this even before that happened.
I've liked girls better ever since I was little....
MY FATHER
WHAT ABOUT YOU, MY DARLING?
I HATED MY FATHER
BUT... YES, I DON'T KNOW WHY I'M LIKE THIS
I WONDER WHY IT IS.
LEAVE THE PSYCHO-ANALYSIS TO THE PROFESS-IONALS
AND ANYWAY, THERE'S NO RHYME OR REASON TO LOVE.
WHETHER IT'S A MAN AND A WOMAN, OR A WOMAN AND A WOMAN... RIGHT?
My Princess Saho....

A hangover—
I drank way too much last night
URGG-HH—
Throb
Throb
Throb
OUCH
UNGH
...If only everything I saw last night was just a dream—
But I have no proof they're lesbians—
What do I do—? Should I tell dad?
She's not back yet
R
R
R
R
R

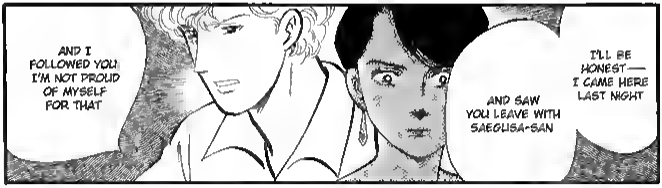
One moment, please
TOMIOKA, IN ROOM 1025, PLEASE.
beep bop
She's still with that woman...
boop boop boop
It seems he's out at the moment. ...
Shall I try again?
OH NO THAT'S FINE
Dad...
Where are you?

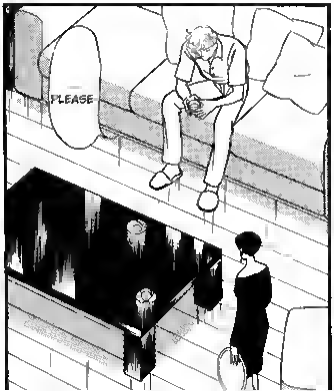
What a huge crowd of people.
People, people, people...
But I need to do *something*
I do know that just wandering around aimlessly like this won't help me find Kayako.
KAYAKO!
KAYAKO
It's not her —
EEEK!
KA—


Kayako.
Kayako.
Why are you doing this to me?
I... I'M SORRY I THOUGHT YOU WERE...
Great! What a creepy old man
sob...
Please come back. I can't live without you...


WHY?

I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU GOODBYE
WHAT YOU SAID WASN'T ENOUGH TO MAKE ME GIVE UP ON YOU
WEL-COME HOME
YOU SURE TOOK YOUR SWEET TIME


AND I FOLLOWED YOU. I'M NOT PROUD OF MYSELF FOR THAT
AND SAW YOU LEAVE WITH SAEGUSA-SAN
I'LL BE HONEST— I CAME HERE LAST NIGHT

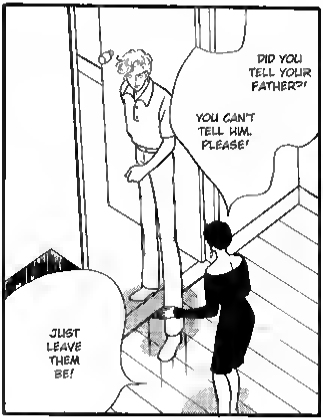

PLEASE

WHY ARE WE TALKING OUT HERE?
WOULD YOU LET ME COME IN?
BE MY GUEST

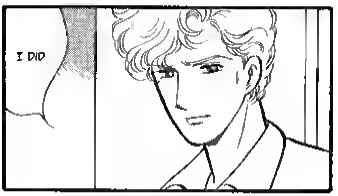
I CAN'T LOVE A MAN.
TELL ME... THAT WOMAN WAS JUST A FRIEND.
TELL ME I MISUNDERSTOOD WHAT I SAW LAST NIGHT
I SHOULDN'T HAVE LED YOU TO EXPECT ANYTHING FROM ME.
— I'M SORRY, NAKAYAMA-SAN
NAKA-YAMA-SAN...
I — LOVE YOU
I —
RESPECTABLE GIRLS NOT LIKE ME —
THERE ARE ANY NUMBER OF GIRLS OUT THERE WHO WOULD BE PERFECT FOR YOU.
YOU'RE A GOOD PERSON.

I COULD'VE COPED WITH IT IF IT'D BEEN ANOTHER GUY. BUT I CAN'T STAND HAVING A WOMAN STEAL YOU FROM ME!
Hwd!
...NO!
NAKA-YAMA-SAN, STOP!
I SAID STOP!
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW GOOD IT IS TO BE WITH A REAL MAN THAT'S WHY
YOU'RE JUST CONTINUING THE "ONEE-SAMA PLAY" FROM THE ALL-GIRL SCHOOL YOU WENT TO RIGHT?
UNNG-GHH'
pant pant
pant pant
smack!

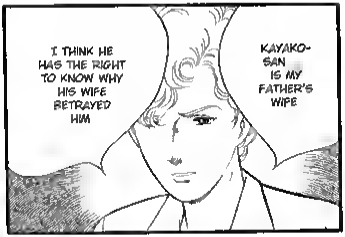
JUST GO!
SORRY
I'M NOT INTO SEX!
I'M A LESBIAN THAT'S ALL
RAPING A WOMAN IS HARDLY GOING TO SHOW HER HOW GOOD IT IS TO BE WITH A MAN!

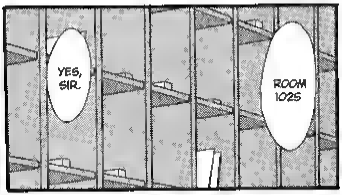

DID YOU TELL YOUR FATHER?!
YOU CAN'T TELL HIM. PLEASE!
JUST LEAVE THEM BE!

WAIT
YOU SAID LAST NIGHT
YOU SAW THEM TOO THEN—?

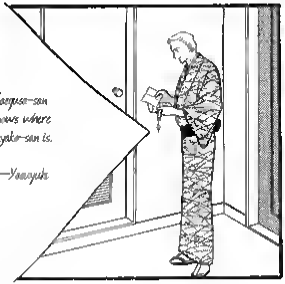

I DID

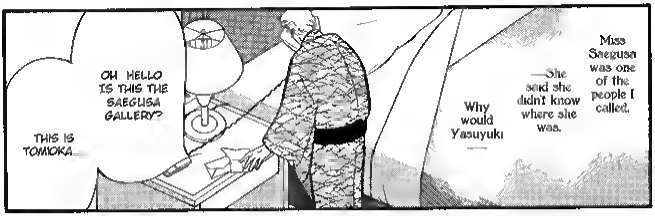
TOMIOKA-SAMA— CORRECT?
YOU HAVE A MESSAGE
THANKS


KAYAKO-SAN IS MY FATHER'S WIFE
I THINK HE HAS THE RIGHT TO KNOW WHY HIS WIFE BETRAYED HIM


ROOM 1025
YES, SIR.

Huh...?


Saegusa-san knows where Kayako-san is.
—Yasuyuki


OH HELLO IS THIS THE SAEGUSA GALLERY?
THIS IS TOMIOKA...
Why would Yasuyuki—
—She said she didn't know where she was.
Miss Saegusa was one of the people I called.

APART-MENT 612 ——
GOT IT. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
HM? HER HOME ADDRESS ——?
OH, MY! TOMIOKA-GAHAKU!
Gallery Sawaki
MY HUMBLEST APOLOGIES. THE HEAD OF THE GALLERY HAS ALREADY LEFT FOR THE DAY ……
YOU LEFT A MESSAGE FOR HIM AT THE DESK ?
YOUR FATHER IS HERE IN TOKYO?!
I won't let anybody—
take Kayako away from me.

I SEE
THANKS
IT'S ALL RIGHT. WE'LL BE CAREFUL YES
THAT SHE WOULD DO THAT TO MY DAD——
KAYAKO-SAN IS ILL!
THEY LIVED TOGETHER AS HUSBAND AND WIFE FOR TEN YEARS
I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST TOO MUCH
SHE'S BEEN GETTING WORSE ALL THIS TIME!
THAT'S WHY SHE LEFT!
THAT'S WHY SHE CAN'T HAVE KIDS
I KNOW SHE HAS A WEAK HEART, RIGHT?
OH
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, I'LL PROTECT YOU
KYOUKO-SAN

Yes?
IT'S TOMI-OKA.
ding dooong
...I'M WORRIED
ding dooong
gulp
DON'T COME OUT OF THE BEDROOM
IT'S YOUR HUS-BAND.
YOU HIDE
PLEASE COME IN, GAHAKU.
Ahuda...

smack
PLEASE!
I BEG OF YOU
TOMIOKA-SAN.
PLEASE TELL ME WHERE KAYAKO IS——!
KAYAKO-SAN MAY BE YOUR WIFE BUT SHE ISN'T YOUR "POSSESSION."
SHE LEFT OF HER OWN FREE WILL. WHY WOULD YOU BRING HER BACK HOME?
I KNEW IT——
YOU KNOW WHERE SHE IS, BUT YOU'RE HIDING IT FROM ME.
I—IF YOU HIDE KAYAKO FROM ME I'LL NEVER SELL YOU ANOTHER PAINTING!
——THAT CAN'T BE HELPED.

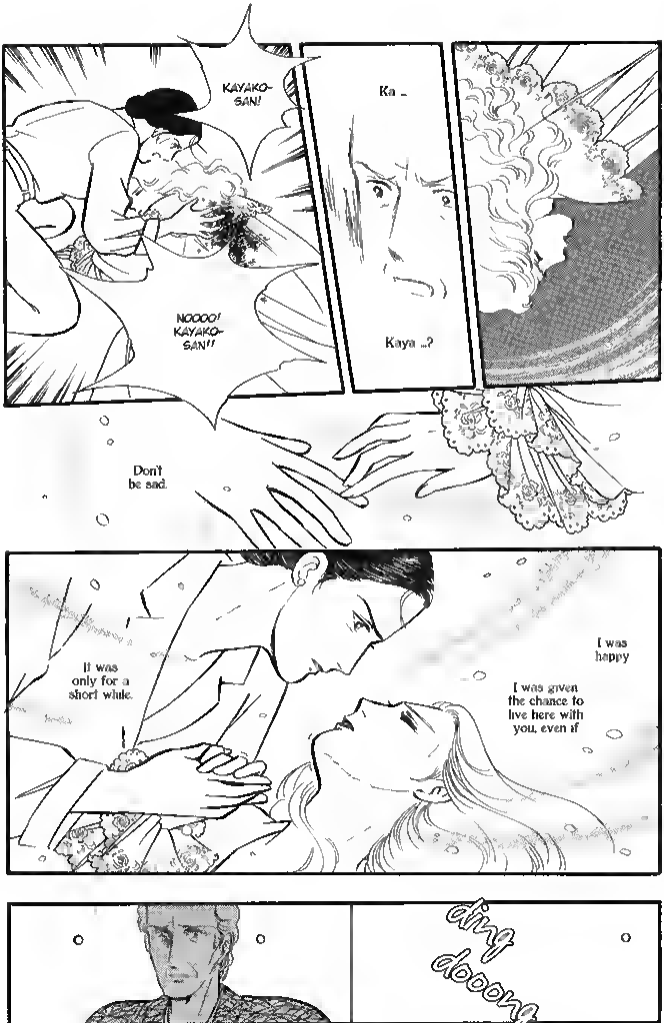
PLEASE STOP
IF YOU DON'T—
WAVING THAT THING AROUND—
I'M SERIOUS!
TOMIOKA-SAN——!
——TELL ME WHERE SHE IS.
slam
STOP, DEAR!
KAYAKO-SAN!
KAYAKO!

SO YOU WERE HIDING OUT HERE...
What..?
NO NO
I TOLD YOU NOT TO COME OUT
What are they...
YOU'RE COMING HOME WITH ME, KAYAKO
I'M NOT GIVING YOU A DIVORCE
COME ON!
PLEASE FORGIVE ME DEAR.
I'LL TELL YOU THE TRUTH
WE'RE IN LOVE

I loved you.
I cast my wife and child aside out of love for you...
...What?
...ALL YOU DID WAS TAKE
I made you my wife because I love you.
Are you saying you never loved me?
YOU JUST MADE ME ONE OF YOUR POSSESSIONS
BUT WHEN I MET HER...
I REALIZED FOR THE FIRST TIME
THAT TRUE LOVE GOES BOTH WAYS— IT'S SOMETHING THAT YOU BOTH GIVE AND RECEIVE

Two women
——?!
I have a bad feeling about this...
HURRY!
FASTER.
THAT'S UNREASONABLE MA'AM
Then...
IF YOU DO, I'LL LET EVERYTHING ELSE GO——
KAYAKO-SAN IS TELLING YOU SHE WON'T GO!
——YOU HAVE ONE LAST CHANCE——
COME HOME WITH ME

I'll take you back by force if I have to!
Thud!
Ahhhh!


KAYAKO-SAN!
Ka ..
NOOOO! KAYAKO-SAN!!
Kaya ...?
Don't be sad.
It was only for a short while.
I was given the chance to live here with you, even if
I was happy
ding dooong

IT'S OPEN!
k-chk
ding dong ding dong
NO ONE'S ANSWERING
COULD THEY BE OUT?
KILL ME...
KILL ME TOO...!!

Her ailing heart couldn't hold out

She was in Saegusa-sans embrace when it happened just as she had wished. ——

I know that I will not live much longer so I've decided to leave home.

When I die, I want to be with the person I love most dearly—the one who holds me most dear

The wound that Tomioka-gahaku inflicted wasn't that deep.

WEEEEEEE

WEEEEEEE

but Kayako-san breathed her last in the ambulance on the way to the hospital.

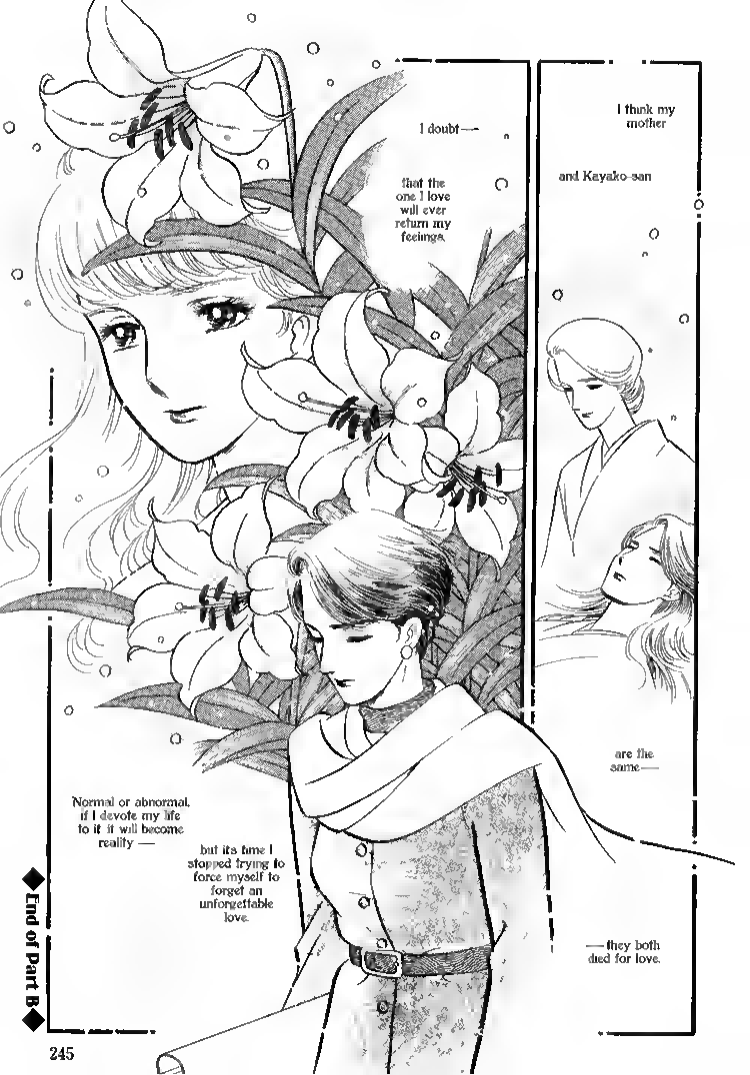
College Square
LONG TIME NO SEE
OH !

YOU DIDN'T HAVE SOME BUSINESS WITH SAEGUSA-SAN?
NO NOT REALLY
I JUST KIND OF WANTED TO STOP BY YOU?
SAME HERE
WHENEVER I'M IN THE GINZA DISTRICT I CAN'T HELP GOING THERE
——JUST TO LOOK AT KAYAKO-SAN'S PICTURE
HOW IS YOUR FATHER?
MM—— LUCKILY HE WAS GIVEN A SUSPENDED SENTENCE SO HE ESCAPED A PRISON SENTENCE——
BUT IT'S LIKE HIS SOUL WAS SUCKED OUT AFTER THE INCIDENT

I THINK MY FATHER REALLY DID LOVE KAYAKO-SAN
He shuts himself up in his studio all day
IN HIS OWN WAY
and paints Kayako-san.
He paints the same picture over and over——
Kayako-san with a smile that's just for him.——
YOU'RE RIGHT.
SORRY
NOT ALL WOUNDS ARE VISIBLE ON THE OUTSIDE
WELL THE PUBLIC DIDN'T FIND OUT SHE WAS A LESBIAN, SO
THE SAEGUSA GALLERY STILL SEEMS TO BE THRIVING.

ARE YOU STILL WITH THAT PERSON ?
OH KAORU-SAN
SEE YOU
NO.
I know
that Saegusa san loves Kayako san.
That she's loved her all this time, and that she'll never stop—

First printed in the January 1991 i ue of *Love You*


I doubt—
that the one I love will ever return my feelings.
I think my mother
and Kayako-san
are the same—
—they both died for love.
but it's time I stopped trying to force myself to forget an unforgettable love.
Normal or abnormal, if I devote my life to it it will become reality —
◆End of Part B◆

Lililicious~may its fragrance encompass you
lilicious@hanmail.net, http://lililicious.net

Warning!

The following scanlation contains mature content. By proceeding, you are acknowledging that you have read and understood this warning, are aware of any applicable laws in your place of residence, and take full responsibility for your own conduct.